

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

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A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the  
old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers

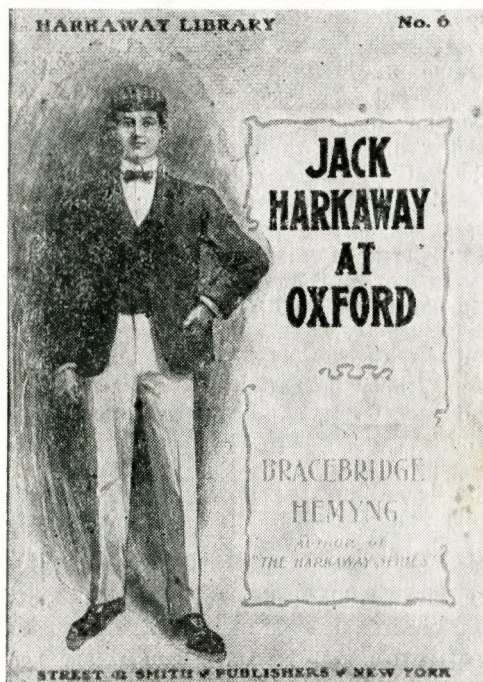
Vol. 55 No. 4

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Whole No. 580

## TREATMENT OF BLACKS IN DIME NOVELS

By J. B. Dobkin



### DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #220

#### HARKAWAY LIBRARY

Publisher: Street & Smith, 238 William St., New York, N. Y. Issues: 34.  
Dates: Feb. 10, 1904 to Oct. 6, 1904. Schedule: Weekly. Size: 7 1/4 x 5".  
Pages: 225-250. Price: 10c. Illustrations: Full length portrait of "Jack  
Harkaway" in one color common to all issues of the series. Contents: A re-  
printing of the Jack Harkaway stories originally published in England.

## TREATMENT OF BLACKS IN DIME NOVELS

By J. B. Dobkin

My assumption that the authors of the Dime and Nickel novels in the 1879-1910 period were treading, if ever so slowly, an upward path toward a more balanced treatment of blacks has not been found to be true. The major change I found during this period, was the virtual disappearance of major black American characters after 1906-7. To place some comprehensible limits on the material involved I have limited my search for black characters mainly to nickel libraries. By flipping through about 8,000 to find a black on the front cover and then scanning the text of all issues that seemed relevant, I came up with over 50 examples of American blacks important to the story line and not just comic relief as a walk-on character. To my surprise few American blacks are found delineated in the later nickel libraries. Many Africans and black denizens of un-named islands and lands appear but the native American black only remains as a servant and subsidiary comic figure. The villain role is handed over, more and more to Orientals, Mexicans, Jews, Portuguese, etc. Through about 1904 side-kicks and trusted servants give comic relief. I found no black hero figures in the nickel libraries—however we note that the story papers of the 1870's and 80's, do provide some examples as Nicodemus the black detective in Frank Leslie's Boys and Girls, 1879, and Plucky Black Tom in Old Sleuth Library, 1887, originally published in Fireside Companion. What emerges in some detail is the black stereotype that persisted in popular literature until the 1950's. The cover art continues to echo in comic post cards up to the same date. By noting the various characteristics, both physical and social, ascribed to the black characters as well as listing the names the authors assigned to them, a fairly monolithic picture emerges. In reference to names—quite often no name is given to a black character and in the majority of cases where a name is given only a first name is supplied. This is in marked contrast to white characters in the same stories. Some of these names appeared a number of times—Pomp or Pompey most of all. Names given for black characters: Ajax, Barnard, Brutus, Carbonera (a Cuban Black), Charcoal, Cooney, Cudjo, Gabble, Jim Tubbs, Mose, Nero, Quacco, Pete, Pompey, Samson, Smokey, Zip, Spot, Africanus Muff, Clem Brown, Joe Jinger (Ginger), Sam, Caesar, "Uncle Job Dinkley," Kentucky Sam, Sambo, Black Jake Sims, Creole Jack, Dud Smith, "Uncle Ebenezer," Scipio Jones, Big Andy, Cato, Juba, The Koromantyn "Tacky," Preston, Pedro Gunn, Spades, Wash, Darkie Dan, Tom, Cuffee. Almost all black females referred to by name are AUNT as Aunt Dinah, Aunt Judy, Aunt Sally.

## Reference to size and strength:

In nearly every instance, black men are described as of great size and/or

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strength. Burly, large, prodigious strength, 6'3" in "height," huge, brawny, tall and powerful, arms of enormous length, giant, big, a great fellow, wonderful bodily physique, an enormous black, a giant in strength, strapping. "A huge fellow, fully 6'4", great muscles standing out on his black skin like an underlying fretwork of steel," or immense height, a black giant. Some black women are referred to similarly; a huge negress, a black giantess, 300 pound jolly old wench. Nearly all full blooded black characters found speak in dialect most of the time and this lends a comic air even when the individual is a major villain. The authors sometimes use the same type of dialect for oriental characters as for blacks. Characteristics noted: Generous, humorous, strong, careless, keen-eyed, devoted, fearsome, faithful, trusted, kindly, kind-hearted, sensible, brave, loyal, resourceful, murderous, thieving, agile, intrepid, good-natured, obstreperous (sic) polite, attentive, shrewd, flashy-dresser, malevolent, cut-throat, devil may-care, superstitious, daring, obstinate, pig-headed, cunning.

Color epithets noted in references to blacks: Blackskin, sable, ebony, lump of licorice, black as a lump of coal, darky, moke, negro, nigger, black hound, coon, black skinned gorilla, colored fellow, black as ace of spades, black as night, swarthy, patent leather, blackamoor, dusky. The teeth of blacks are referred to as ivories, gleaming ivories and their smile has the gleam of ivory, glistening ivories. The hair of blacks is inevitably described as wool. Kinky wool, grey wool or white wool in the case of an aged black man.

### Specific Quotes From the Literature

Beadle's Dime Fiction—New Series #2, 1864. The Outlaw Brothers, by John J. Marshall.

Brutus (servant) is a comic figure. He is addressed mockingly by a white, "Ah, Brutus still as sublime as ever," and described "... as a large singular looking negro came up, and took the reins of the animals." Brutus, like most blacks had "a way with" animals.

Beadle's Half-Dime Library Vol. 4, #93, 1879. The Boy Miners; or the Enchanted Island. (Edw. S. Ellis).

Jim Tubs a large negro—speaks. "Dey hain't cotched dis pusson yit." The author describes Jim as—"Lumbering along somewhat after the manner of an ox," and then adds, "Jim was 6'3" in hight (sic) and along his limbs was deposited an enormous quantity of muscle almost as hard as the bone itself. . . a man of prodigious strength," Jim speaks in true stereotypical fashion—"dey didn't hurt me; dey hit me on the head." A white minor character says "a black man off on business—I never heard of such a thing." Jim's character is spoken of as, generous, humorous, strong, careless, very good, hard worker, keen-eyed and he has a remarkable memory, as the story ends, Jim goes home to his poor mother "who had sustained herself by weak tea, a strong pipe and tremendous washing and ironing."

Bowery Boy Library #69—2/9/1907. Bowery Billy's Strange Case, by John R. Conway.

Barnard—a Negro who only speaks German is referred to as "a nice Negro—black and shining as a lump of coal" this darky; "a giant in size and strength, ths Negro, the blackman, and as dis nigger. Barnard was a tool of the villains in this tale.

Brave and Bold #77—6/14/1904. Checkered Trails, by Marline Manley.

Cudjo—a brawny black is described in detail as the mad Negro—a believer in the fetish of the Africans, a full blooded, huge Senegambian. His thick lips, broad nose and jet black skin told. . he had come from Africa.

His gray wool indicated his age. He maintained his voodoo worship and died in an alligator fight. This story had a Florida locale and Tampa anecdotes.

The Five Cent Comic Library #148, vol. 6—10/9/1896 and #147 10/2/1896, Chips and China—1 and 2.

"Aunt Sally 300 pound jolly old wench," and Spades (Mr. Douglass) a banjo playing negro tramp—"Patent Leather banjo player," are secondary characters but spades is much involved in the story line.

The Five Cent Comic Library #157 Vol. 7, 3/5/1897 and #158 3/12/1897. Yellow and Black, by Sam Smiley.

A "Coon" from Thompson Street in N. Y. by the name of George Washington Ebenezer Jackson, but known as Wash. Wash was tall and knock-kneed talked in deliberate tones.

Handsome Harry #1, 1/27/1899—thru #16, 5/12/1899. Handsome Harry of the Fighting Belvedere, the black character who appears in each story is Samson "the tall powerful negro" referred to as "you lump of licorice," and "the blessed nigger," his broad grin is always present. Throughout the Handsome Harry series Samson and Ching Ching, a Chinese, speak an almost identical dialect.

James Boys Weekly #113 2/20/1903. James Boys Wild Riders.

The detective masquerades as various black men and comic minor black figures appear, humorous—comic stereotypical figures are shown on cover.

#127 5/29/1903—James Boys and the Mail Robbers. "A dwarfed misshapen creature. . . with big feet, big hands, arms of enormous length and face as black as the ace of spades." A Mulatto villain speaks standard English, while an Octoroon beauty is referred to as "nigger." The Octoroon marries a white and is identified as a black by her finger nails. She also is known as the voodoo Queen.

New Nick Carter Weekly—#348 8/27/1903. Nick Carter's Battle Against Odds.

Pedro Gunn, a Mulatto barber with sharp black eyes, a scanty moustache and gold rings in his ears tries to stab Nick.

New Nick Carter Weekly—#362. 12/5/1903. Nick Carter's Search for a Motive.

A black of "immense height"—Sambo, a villain who speaks standard English is a tool of the whites.

New Nick Carter Weekly—#445. 7/8/1905. A Millionaire Criminal.

An un-named black "giant negress" attempts to murder the heroine and is foiled by Nick who "snaps her arms."

New Nick Carter Weekly—#521. 12/22/1906. The Mysterious Stranger, Preston.

Nick Carter to heroine, speaking of Preston the black servant. "Is faithful"? She, "oh yes, we are a Southern Family." Preston mixes "fair English and a word or two (of) the dialect of his childhood." Nick says "you are the most obstinate nigger I ever saw" and Preston's response is "Yessuh, thank you suh."

The New York Dime Library—#1063, vol. 83, 1881. Darkie Dan, the Colored Detective by Prentiss Ingraham (actual name Daniel Dorcas).

Dan is "faithful to his master through the fighting for the lost cause and refused to meddle in politics," (Reconstruction) and is finally a cotton planter and "one of the shining lights of his race." Ingraham had of course been a Confederate officer reveals his patronizing attitudes at length. (In Noel's, Villains Galore—quoting Ingraham):



"I have written 122 novels  
862 short stories  
and 2431 short scraps,  
a total of 89,544 pages" so much for quantity. . . .

Old Sleuth Library—#39, vol. 2, 1887—original copyright 1874. Plucky Black Tom, by Old Sleuth (Harlan P. Halsey).

"A good natured but mischievous negro boy," who plays one practical joke after another on his tormentors: "little blackamoor," "Friendless little darky," "the nasty nigger," "the dusky lad," "Little black waif," "a nimble little nig," "you black rascal," "mischievous little nig."

The following are among the more important quotations found in Plucky Black Tom:

Nigger, nigger, nebber die,  
Black face and shiny eye;  
flat feet and crooked nose,  
that's the way the nigger goes!

"Many a negro who may yet grace the halls of congress, and pronounce an oration replete with wit and wisdom, will do so in the pathos (patois) peculiar to his slave ancestors, and still be educated and intelligent."

"He was a bright mulatto and for one of his race an exceedingly handsome youth."

"The only white thing about him, two rows of glistening ivories."

Old Sleuth Library—#41, vol. 2, 1888 (1875). Black Tom in Search of a Father.

"A gay moke," "Yaller," "dandy nigger," "cuffee." In response to a black man orating as follows. "Dar ain't no use tryin' to hide de fact dot de colored folks am jes' as much 'titled to de right franchise as de white trash. . . ." Black Tom throws rotten eggs at the speaker. In speaking of the reunion of Tom's long separated mulatto mother and black congressman father—the author wins the prize for condescension. The meeting was as affectionate as they had been of "marble whiteness."

Paul Jones Weekly #11. 12/9/1905. Paul Jones' Double.

Big Andy, an "escaped slave" as desperate a negro as had ever been landed in Virginia. "I's on'y a po' abused niggah"—is a typical response. Scipio is Jones' servant in this tale. Most of the blacks are portrayed as either villainous or stupid.

Pluck and Luck, #7, 1898. The Little Swamp Fox.

"Pompey, servant of the hero Robert Singleton 'Marse Robert.'" "Pompey butts Redcoats like a goat." Comic but positive image as a lead character. "The Swamp Goat" is given his freedom after he kills bad whites with impunity.

Pluck and Luck, #15. The Little Demon; or Plotting Against the Czar Quacco is described as "the giant negro with a piercing and malevolent look." The white hero says, "being brought up to look down on the negro as inferior being". . . Quacco is portrayed as devoted, careless, and fearless. (Interesting portrayal of a nihilist Jew also).

Pluck and Luck #22, 1898. Rattling Rube.

Revolutionary War story centering on Benedict Arnold—Pete the black servant and slave is faithful and trusted companion to the hero. He is only a subsidiary character—he had a way with horses and is a good example of the black who relates to animals.

Pluck and Luck #35. Happy Jack the Daring Spy, by "General James A. Gordon.

A white Spy (union) goes in black face to fool confederates.

Pluck and Luck #64. A Poor Irish Boy, by Capt. Morgan Rattler.

"Ajax, a big negro—kind hearted." "The big negro was a sensible fellow and he gave me some sound advice." "I is black but my heart is whiter than yers a hundred times ober." "The kindly negro." "The big negro was in all athletic games." "My colored friends." Ajax is not mentioned in resolution of the plot, but is shown always as strong, loyal and perceptive.

Pluck and Luck #146, 3/20/1901. The Diamond Island, by Allan Arnold.

Zip a colored boy, comic relief "faithful black, resourceful." At end "Zip is a respectable colored gentleman employed as head porter by our three young merchants."

Pluck and Luck #182. Where? By no-name.

Gabble a black servant "good gabble, brave gabble" comic but brave and always loyal.

Pluck and Luck #278, 9/30/1903. Jack Wrights Flying Torpedo. By "no name."

Story of run-away slave in the North Carolina Great Dismal Swamp. "Come along with me you black hound." Hero says "Is it your duty to murder niggers?" "What has become of the coon?" "The frightful record of the black swamp dwellies." "Murderous thieving negroes." "These revolting wretches have retained many of their native African customs." Numerous references to the "coons" and "darkies." Hero and friends kill numbers of blacks without blinking an eye.

Pluck and Luck #324, 8/17/1904. Canoe Carl, by Allan Arnold.

"Cooney the young darky" is an important character. The black boy. . . was a seafaring lad. . . whom Carl had saved from a gang. His real name was Sanchez, but he was so black and comical that Carl persisted in calling him "Cooney." Out of gratitude Cooney agreed to be Carl's servant. Cooney is agile, strong, intrepid and loyal—a real seaman. A villain refers to him as, "you black-skinned gorilla." Cooney butts his enemies like a goat.

Secret Service #36, 9/29/1899. The Brady's Down South.

Major roles played by blacks as villains. A mulatto "Yaller" negro is Creole Jack. Dud Smith and Aunt Judy are important to the plot. Voodoo in New Orleans also figures in the story.

Secret Service #85, 9/7/1900. The Brady's Last Chance.

Black Jake Sims, "the worst sneak thief in New York." "Don't you sass me, nigger, or I'll make yer sick." Sims frequently speaks "standard" English. One of the black characters noted in a major (if negative) role.

Secret Service #125, 6/14/1901. The Brady's and the Missing Girl.

A voodoo charm plays a large part in the story. A Brady says "the negro crook is the shrewdest of crooks and the class hang closely together" and then produces Aunt Dinah and Pete Jackson and Jeff Chase, 3 blacks of evil nature. "Sambo, saddle the mustang," fits right in with the tale. Most of this story takes place in the South, both in Charleston, S. C. and the Sanford, Florida area. The author calls the Wekiva River, north of Orlando, off the St. Johns, "a typical river of the Everglades." Only 200 miles off in his geography.

Secret Service #133, 8/9/1901. The Brady's at Coney Island.

The "gut" at Coney Island wholly "habited by black people of depraved character." A black called "Kentucky Sam" is described "the darky's face bore an ugly resentful expression." He only appears in brief and is shown on the cover.

Secret Service #258, 1/1/1904. The Brady's and Joe Jinger.



Joe Jinger is an ex-slave in North Carolina. Joe says he is "a red-headed niggah, suh—hence the name." His real name is Joe Clayton. Joe dies in the story and thus his criminal activities can be forgiven or ignored.

Secret Service #392, 7/27/1906. The Brady's Race with Death.

Sam, an old colored man with "wool as white as snow" appears along with "Gus Johnsing" a black and a major character who rescues the Bradys.

Snaps #32, 5/16/1900. Spry and Spot; the hustling drummer and the Cheeky Coon: Spot—the dandy coon.

Snaps #38, 6/27/1900. Old Grimes Boy.

"A young coon named Pomp." "A nigger baby show."

Snaps #47. "Africanus Muff" general utility colored man.

Snaps #66, 1/9/1900. Fat Clem Brown; or the Laziest Coon in Town.

Clem is the butt of all practical jokes. Other black characters are "Mr. Bullwagon" and "Sister Samantha Buckwheat."

Work and Win 1, 12/9/1898. Fred Fearnot of School-Days at Avon.

Peter the black porter—the hero calls him "charcoal" and plays on his gullibility. Is made the butt of many jokes.

Work and Win #55, 12/22/1899. Fred Fearnot's Defiance.

Mose—the big burly black, with ebony face. "He had grown to love Fred." Loyal through all jokes.

Fred says "all coons love fish" and describes Mose as follows: "His mouth watering at the mention of fish, chicken and watermelons."

Work and Win #69, 3/30/1900. Fred Fearnot's Minstrels.

Perpetrates every cliché of the black stereotype. As Fred makes money by imitating "coons" as part of the repartee one of Fred's blackface side-kicks says "Don't youse let a coon kiss his gal in dis heah town" an audience member loudly responds "not in public, Sambo."

Work and Win #72, 4/20/1900. Fred Fearnot in the South.

A white villain calls his pistol his "coon killer" while one of the renegade blacks says "what are you white folks shooting at niggers for?" In the end the "black railroad thieves are shot up and captured by Fearless Marksman Fred."

Work and Win #93, 9/14/1900. Fred Fearnot's Last Shot.

Comic characters—awed and frightened by talking fish and birds (Fred Fearnot's ventriloquism). Black's are shown as ignorant and superstitious.

Work and Win #110. Fred Fearnot's Fine Work.

Mose the servant of Fred Fearnot plays his usual comic role.

Work and Win #134, 6/25/1901. Fred Fearnot in Atlanta; or, the Black fiend of Darktown.

Priceless dialog "this is the negro quarter?" "Yes, we call it 'Darktown' here, by and by it will be occupied by whites." "What will become of the blacks then?" "They'll have to go out further: . . we could spare half to go a thousand miles away." "Oh you'll have to keep some as laborers." "Yes, we'll always have some. . . but thousands (of whites) prefer to do their own work rather than have the thieving blacks come in the house." "Are they all thieves?" "Nine out of ten whites think they are." "Do they make good cooks?" "Before the war. . . no more faithful servant could be found anywhere." "It is all different now." "The old black mammy has disappeared and in her place are the most worthless specimens of humanity." "I don't believe that there is a colored preacher in all the South who thinks that stealing watermelons out of a white man's patch is morally wrong."

Work and Win #379, 3/9/1906. Fred Fearnot and the Diamond Queen.

A "huge negro follows the bidding of the female villain"—he is unnamed.

Work and Win #238, 6/26/1903. Fred Fearnot and Old Grizzly.

An enormous black, the giant negro. (Dies in his struggle with Fred Fearnot).

Young Glory #5, 5/20/1898. Young Glory Under Fire.

Young Glory speaks of "a huge negro." "The huge darky" and "the black giant." He says "bedad, I don't want to kill the poor nigger." The black is a minor character but is shown in the cover art in true stereotypical style.

Young Rover Library #22, 2/18/1905. Link Rover's Discovery.

Smokey—a coon who plays the part of hotel porter. Purely comic and stereotypical.

Young Rover Library #45, 7/24/1905. Young Rover's Journey.

Auntie is a colored lady who believed she knew how to cook better than any "poor white trash" also, "a negro mammy with muscles like a man," "the fat coon." Several pages of stereotypical black dialog.

Young Rovers Library #48, 8/19/1905. Link Rover's Magic Salve.

"Carbonera," a great fellow, broad of shoulders, with wonderful bodily physique—except for maimed legs." A black of Cuban heritage. Displays gratitude—as well as strength.

When all the quotations are read and digested, when all of the cover art is examined and analyzed. What emerges? The answer of course is the grossest sort of racial stereotype. The black is patronized, denigrated and generally portrayed as a slightly sub-human creature.

We who can remember the day when this picture still pervaded much of popular literature and who joined in the general laughter it evoked have little reason to be proud. The barbs fashioned by the white authors of the late 19th and the early years of the 20th century remained aimed at American blacks in our popular literature, films and radio programs. Even post-cards carried truly offensive "humorous" caricatures of blacks until the early 1950's.

If we could substitute our racial, ethnic or religious group as the target of these often repeated slurs perhaps we could better appreciate the pain that was inflicted by this "innocent merriment."

## ILLUSTRATED BY WALTER S. ROGERS

By Bob Chenu

Walter S. Rogers was an illustrator whose work is frequently found in juvenile series books of the first third of this century. His art work is found in many of these books copyrighted in the period from 1911 through 1931. The series involved include many of the most popular best sellers of this era. Many of them were Stratemeyer Syndicate products.

Although the title page of these books sometimes states who the illustrator was this is not always the case. Often it merely states "illustrated," but does not identify the artist. In such instances one must turn to the pictures and seek the name or identity on them. There may be a name or initials shown, generally towards the bottom of the illustration, sort of hidden in grass, bushes, water, etc. In other cases there is no such identification evident, and one must attempt to identify the artist by his or her style.

An instance of such unidentified work can be found in "The Boys of Columbia High Series" a Stratemeyer Syndicate product attributed to the "house"



name of Graham B. Forbes. In his bibliography Harry Hudson notes, "it is believed W. S. Rogers did all of the illustrations." Examination of the books shows that volumes 1-6 bear no indication of who the artist was. Volumes 7 and 8 are signed "W. Rogers." The style is the same for all, hence Hudson drew the inference that all were illustrated by Rogers. This inference is probably correct.

The two reference sources which I used most heavily in tackling this question were Harry Hudson's "A Bibliography of Hard-Cover, Series Type Boys Books Revised Edition," and Deidre Johnson's "Stratemeyer Pseudonyms and Series Books." Both are helpful in that they identify illustrators. I used both in checking to see which series books illustrators are attributed to Walter S. Rogers.

The first observation noted from this review was that there are a great number of series books which have their illustrations attributed to Rogers. Study of these shows that the first copyright date found is 1911, and the last found is 1931. It was also noted that the great bulk of what I found were Stratemeyer Syndicate output, and were consequently books published by those firms which heavily patronized the Syndicate for their Juvenile lines. This result is not as complete in girls series books as it is in boys books since Johnson's concentration was on the Syndicate output, and I had no check on no-Syndicate series.

Though it thus appears that Rogers may have been connected with the Syndicate rather than with the publishers, there are some books found which he illustrated which are not Syndicate products. The publishers most heavily represented are G&D and C&L, but there are also a number published by B&H, Sully, and Page.

Non-Syndicate books found include a book published by Page in 1917 entitled "The Barbarian." This was written by Brewer Corcoran. It does not seem to be related to the Syndicate. Page also published "The Pioneer Boys Series." Rogers illustrated 3 of this series in 1914, 1915, and 1916. These show "Harrison Adams" as author. This name is supposed to have been a pen name used by St. George Rathborne, but this series has been claimed by the Syndicate. Rogers also illustrated volumes 3-6 of the "Dick Hamilton Series" by Howard Garis. Though Garis was closely connected with the Syndicate and wrote many books for them, as also did his wife and son and daughter, he was also a well known writer who produced many books of his own under his own name.

He also illustrated at least 2 books by Lillian Elizabeth Roy in the "Little Woodcrafters Series." This is not a Syndicate house name, and further he illustrated volumes 2-3 of the "Tom Slade Series" by Percy Keese Fitzhugh. Fitzhugh was of course not only a real person, definitely not a Syndicate writer, but was a Boy Scouts of America "protege" encouraged to write these books as an offset to the lurid series type of book supposedly exemplified by the Syndicate.

Though Rogers' work is found used widely in Syndicate products he did not work exclusively for them. His work is also not found exclusively in the books of any one publisher.

Attempts to find material on Walter S. Rogers in various reference works on illustrators was generally fruitless. As I had no luck, at my request Deidre Johnson searched at the University of Minnesota Library, also without success. The one item that I found was a brief article in "The Boys Book Collector," Vol. 4, No. 1 (1973) by Alan S. Dikty titled "William A. Rogers Cartoonist-Illustrator." It is illustrated with cuts of political car-

toons and series book illustrations the latter are signed "W. S. Rogers." The inference is plainly that Walter S. Rogers and William A. Rogers were the same person though the article does not specifically so state.

On looking further into William A. Rogers, references to him were found in books on artists and illustrators, and I found that he died in late 1931. This squares with the lack of books with Walter S. Rogers illustrations after that date. It would also possibly clarify signed artwork by "Rogers," "W. Rogers," and "W. S. Rogers." If the artist had made a name for himself as a political cartoonist it is possible that he might wish to use a penname (or "brush name") in this new field, which he might regard as of lesser originality.

It therefore seems quite likely that William Allen Rogers was the real name of Walter S. Rogers. My examination of the "Rogers" name as inscribed on illustrations attributed to William has me convinced that it is the same hand which wrote the "Rogers" on illustrations attributed to Walter S. In any event, William Allen Rogers was born in Springfield, Ohio May 23, 1854 and died aged 77 on October 20, 1931. He was both a cartoonist and illustrator, and also wrote a few books, which from the titles are not likely juveniles. He illustrated for Harpers Weekly, and among non-Syndicate juvenile books he illustrated "Boy Settlers" by Noah Brooks, "Jenny Wren's Boarding House" and "Toby Tyler" by James Otis Kaler, and "Canoe Mates" and "Raft Mates" by Kirk Munroe.

I wish to thank Jack Dizer, Deidre Johnson, and Bob Matteson for aid in helping me check some of the material embodied in this article, as well as acknowledging the aid in Johnson's book on Syndicate pen names and Harry Hudson's bibliography.

Appended is a listing of books illustrated by Rogers, divided between boys series books and Girls and/ or small tots series. A review of these shows that his illustrations were used in many of the better known series published. Included are such major series as Tom Swift, Rover Boys, Don Sturdy, Hardy Boys, and X-X Boys among boys series and The Outdoor Girls, Moving Picture Girls, and Ruth Fielding for girls. Small tots series include Six Little Bunkers, Honey Bunch, Bobbsey Twins, and Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue.

Rogers art work is thus of major importance in the area of juvenile series books, though there is not much known about him and even his identity is less than clear when one tries to explore it.

#### BOYS SERIES

Series	Vols.	Dates	Publisher
Boys of Columbit High	1-8	1911-20	G&D
Dick Hamilton	3-6	1911-14	nonsyndicate G&D
Rover Boys	15-17,19-30	1911-26	G&D
F. V. Webster Series	18-25	1911-15	C&L
Baseball Joe	1-6	1912-16	C&L
Rover Boys	1-6	1912-14	C&L
Fred Fenton	1-5	1913-15	C&L
Motion Picture Chums	4-7	1914-16	G&D
Moving Picture Boys	1-8	1913-16	G&D
Saddle Boys	1-5	1913-15	C&L
Speedwell Boys	1-5	1913-15	C&L
Dave Porter	10-13	1914-17	LL&S
Pioneer Boys	4-6	1914-28	syndicate? Page
Uncle Sams Service Series	1-2	1914-18	Sully
Tom Swift	17-20,24-34	1914-31	G&D
Tom Fairfield	5	1915	C&L



Motor Boys	16-17,22	1915-24	C&L
Outdoor Chums	7-8	1915-16	G&D
Joe Strong	1-7	1916	Sully
Rushton Boys	1-3	1916	Sully
White Ribbon Boys	1	1916	C&L
YMCA Boys	1	1916	C&L
Tom Slade	2-3	1917	nonsyndicate G&D
St. Jo's Series	2	1917	nonsyndicate Page
Air Service Boys	5-6	1920	Sully
Bobby Blake	10-11	1922-23	B&H
Radio Boys	1-13	1922-30	G&D
Ralph RR Series	7-10	1923-28	G&D
Don Sturdy	1-11	1925-31	G&D
Bomba the Jungle Boy	1-6	1926-28	C&L
Garry Grayson	1-9	1926-31	G&D
X-X Boys	1-10	1926-31	G&D
Hardy Boys	1-10	1927-31	G&D
Ted Scott	1-14	1927-31	G&D
Woodcraft Boys	2-3	1928	nonsyndicate G&D
Buck and Larry	1-4	1930-31	G&D

## GIRLS—TOTS SERIES

Series	Vols.	Dates	Publisher
Motor Girls	7-9	1914-16	C&L
Moving Picture Girls	1-7	1914-16	G&D
Dorothy Dale	9-10	1914-15	C&L
Amy Bell Marlowe Series	1-3,7	1914-16	G&D
Outdoor Girls	6-8,10-21	1915-31	G&D
Girls of Central High	6	1915	G&D
Ruth Fielding	6,8-10	1915-16	C&L
Kneetime Animal Stories	7-10,15-16	1916-21	B&H
Bobbsey Twins**	8-15,17,22-24	1916-31	G&D
Bunny Brown & Sister Sue	9-20	1919-31	G&D
Oriole	1-4	1920-27	G&D
Four Little Blossoms	4	1921	Sully
Six Little Bunkers	7-14	1921-30	G&D
Janice Day	5	1922	Sully
Billie Bradley	5	1922	Sully
Honey Bunch	1-12	1923-31	G&D
Betty Gordon	7	1924	C&L
Riddle Club	2-6	1924-29	G&D
Flyaways	1-3	1925	G&D

\*\*Volume I of the Bobbsey Twins, originally published by Mershon in 1904 was not illustrated by Rogers. It was revised in 1928 and Rogers did the illustrations then used.

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## THE BRILLIANT MIND OF C. A. STEPHENS

By Louise Harris

It is time, I think, to consider the "Brilliant Mind of C. A. Stephens." He was fifty to one-hundred years ahead of the time in which he lived. The demand for his stories is mainly for the "farm stories" with a neglect of his earliest books and especially to know anything about his research work. Reading his books chronologically gives a good picture of his life as well as history of the times. He entered Bowdoin in the Sophomore year as a Self-Sender, started the third year when his funds ran out. He started to walk home to Boston. A look at the map will give a good idea of the walk in the dead of winter. Apparently he continued his studies and worked so he could enter the Senior year. He graduated in 1869 but his diploma was held up because he owed quite a debt. I am told he was charged six percent on the debt until it was paid. Quite a stiff charge in those days. It appears Bowdoin did not care too much about the Self-Senders.

He started to write his stories while at Bowdoin for college expenses. The family had spelt the name STEVENS. He decided to spell it STEPHENS then if he failed it would not reflect on the family. He started with "Our Flag" (Flag of Our Union) with great success. By this time "Ballou's Monthly" had purchased the paper and retired it at the end of 1870. There were manuscripts left and Ballou's considered them excellent and published them. Here we find he used the pen-name Kit Carson, Jr. The serial GUESS was well received and ran for two years. Some of the characters are found in the CAMPING OUT SERIES. So a pen-name was started at the very beginning.

He collected quite a personal library. He wrote his name on every book. I was told one day at the library that he did not travel to all the places he wrote about. He read about them and then wrote. What a stupid and ignorant statement. The librarian never compared copyright dates. There was one book written about the same area as Stephen had travelled but the copyright date was a few years later than Stephens' story. One person obtained a book when the Laboratory was being torn down I very much wanted for his name was written in it. The copyright date showed it was several years later than Stephens' trip. The person told me to go to a second hand dealer and obtain it. He certainly "missed the boat" that time! The library also shows how much Latin he knew and used in his scientific books. So his personal library has proved to be a good source biographically if only I could find the rest of his books. In this period writers were very stiff and hard for readers to become interested—John Trowbridge, Louisa Alcott, Elijah Kellogg and on. Stephens started to write as he talked. A very new way of writing. His stories were delightful and developed a great demand for them. Here are the grandparents, the farm, the cousins and schoolmates, Lake Pennesseewassee that will be found throughout all his stories. The roads are so well described that I have found many and driven over them finding the background for many of the stories. Remember these stories were written for college expenses only. No thought at all of a writing career.

While at Bowdoin Stephens became interested in medical science. He was hesitating between a writing career and returning to Bowdoin to study medicine. Elijah Kellogg put his hand on Stephens shoulder and said,

"You better stick to your writing. You will do far better than in medicine."

He went out to Kansas where Theodora was teaching in the homesteaders



schools. Theodora was second cousin to Stephens and the one in the stories. Her mother was a cousin to Stephens' father. No work. Nothing for him to do, not even cutting wood which was always his last resort. He came home when he had only enough money for fare by the shortest route with only five cents for food. He purchased the biggest amount he could get whether he liked it or not. It was food! He walked from Montreal, went to his mother's pantry, filled up and then announced he was going to write and would go to Boston. His parents sold a cow for his Boston fare. He was on the road to meet Mr. Ford and launched his career.

During this time when he was at home he started in rather a haphazard way doing research on prolonging life by diet or rather proper nutrition. He was always encouraged by his Grandfather Upton whom he called the Old Squire in his stories. In 1884 Mr. Ford sent him to Boston University Medical School to have a doctor on the staff to write the weekly medical items so as to have them as accurate as possible for the readers to use. He was forty years old when he started medical school and graduated in the top ten of his class. Now he started serious research on nutrition to have "immortal life on earth." Nothing had ever been done on this subject. Minne continued to use this diet after "Charles" had passed on. In 1974 an announcement was made of a new research starting on diet to prolong life to 200 to 400 years! New? No, not new for this is what Stephens started from scratch in 1869! He researched around 167 religions to be sure he was not breaking a law of nature or the edict of God. He places at the top of the list Christ who was 2000 years ahead of his time and was not allowed to live. If he were living then Stephens said he would still be 2000 years ahead of his time. Then comes the Hebrew religion followed by Moslem and Buddha. He accepts Christ but the church has too much of the old paganism. He constantly refers to Christ.

These books show how much history he knew. In his 1903 book he states birds must have atomic energy to keep warm for they can not eat enough for the cold weather otherwise. Around 1905 he states the radio is well on the road and TV will be developed. In 1910 he states the atom will be split within the next 50 years. Just 35! He was interested in all the research leading to what today we call transplant. He definitely states he wonders what would happen if the brain of a younger person could be placed in an older person. Remember, transplants had not been thought of (1920)! He thought he had failed. He stopped his research. He was just too far ahead of his time. That is all. No one would listen. Anyone who did research was considered no good. He was not capable of doing anything else worthwhile.

Before World War I he thought a group of scientists working more or less together could accomplish more than one alone in the same amount of time. So he planned to enlarge the laboratory by a large addition to the farmhouse of his parents with rooms for all the researchers to come from all over the world with a large hall for lectures and talks. He had a man interested enough to help financially. Then the war came, the financial help was gone as well as the scientists. Another failure or so he thought. Was it? Just too far ahead of his time. That is all!

He continued to write his stories, even when confined to bed, just as long as he could hold a pencil. Minne typed all his stories.

Too bad the owner of the "American Boy," who bought "The Youth's Companion" from the "Atlantic Monthly" in 1929 treated Mr. Stephens so badly. I think it hastened his passing. The owner was interested only in a large mailing list. He did nothing with "The Companion." How I wish

I had kept the two letters they wrote to me. They were so rotten I could not stand to keep them. I had no idea of doing any of the work I have done.

Mr. Stephens left us on September 22, 1931. Minne published the Memorial Edition. She wanted me to come and help. She just refused to understand I had my parents' responsibilities. I had to keep my promise to him. She thought I had let her down so I do not have all the material I should have had. There would not be so many gaps in my work. I often wonder what she would say if she could see what I have managed to accomplish when my promise was finished. What would she say to all my wonderful honors on both sides of the ocean I have been given. Would she still think I had let her down? I doubt it very much. I think she would be delighted and very proud that the Brown Medical School has put the scientific books into the medical library for the medical history. The other books are there also for the knowledge of his life. Several of "The Youth's Companions" are there for the medical articles, some of which Stephens wrote. I wonder what Stephens would say to this act. Proof that his work was important after all that was said and one against him in those long ago days. Now with all this work our "beloved" C. A. Stephens will never be forgotten nor his wonderful, delightful stories either.

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Miss Harris is presently engaged in rewriting and updating her bibliography of the works of C. A. Stephens.

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**CORRECTION:** In the last issue, Vol. 55 No. 3, Page 43, last line of article the date should read April 6, 1924 and not 1914.

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## RECENT ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS, SERIES BOOKS, Etc.

**NANCY DREW: THEN AND NOW**, by Deborah Felder. Article in Publisher's Weekly, May 30, 1986. Comparing the early Nancy Drew stories with the "repackaging for a new generation." (Sent in by Jack Bales)

**NANCY DREW VS. SERIOUS FICTION**, by Eileen Goudge Zuckerman. Article in Publishers Weekly May 30, 1986. Espouses the view that it is better for a young person to read series books than not to read at all. The young reader will graduate to more serious reading. (Sent in by Jack Bales)

**1980s NO LONGER A MYSTERY TO NANCY DREW**, by Robert Basler. Article in Chicago Tribune, July 10, 1986. Cursory review of new and forthcoming Nancy Drew books.

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## A DIME NOVEL COLLECTOR'S BOOKSHELF

**THE COWGIRLS**, by Joyce Gibson Roach. Horseman Books, Condo van Corporation, Houston, Texas. A history of women engaged in ranching. A chapter is devoted to the role of the cowgirl in dime novels illustrated by a cover of Rough Rider Weekly.

**MABEL PARKER; OR, THE HIDDEN TREASURE**, by Horatio Alger, Jr., with a preface by Gary Scharnhorst. Archon Books, Hamden, Conn. 06514. First edition of an Alger story from a manuscript found in the Street & Smith archives at Syracuse University.



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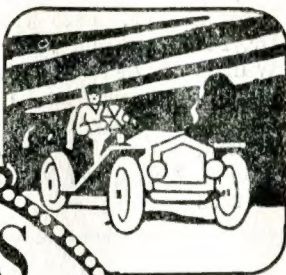
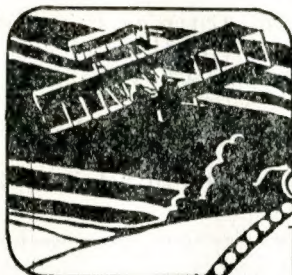
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